

# Act to Bring Child Support Home

Lead Sponsors: Representative Wolf, Senator Creem  
HD 998, SD 745

## Bringing child support home—

- Keeps child support dollars in Massachusetts instead of sending them to the federal government,
- Encourages custodial parents to pursue child support because they know their children will benefit,
- Encourages noncustodial parents to work and pay child support, strengthening connections between noncustodial parents and their children, and
- Increases families' non-welfare income, helping them leave TAFDC and stay off TAFDC.

## How much will this bill cost?

Because the federal government will waive its half of the collection, the bill is estimated to yield an annual gain of \$24.2 M for families at a reduction in child support recovery to the state of \$12.1 M.

**The gain of \$24.2 M for families will generate a stimulus effect in the local economy of \$44.5 M**, most of which is paid for with child support that otherwise would be sent to Washington.

The provisions would not be implemented until July 1, 2013, when the state's fiscal picture is expected to have improved.

## Child Support is for Families

This bill brings child support home by paying it to needy families instead of the federal government.

### Child support for children receiving TAFDC

Families receiving TAFDC are required to assign their child support rights to the state. Currently, Massachusetts pays the family a maximum of only \$50 a month of the child support it collects for their children, regardless of the number of children. The rest is split between the state and the federal government.

A change in federal law encourages states to send families more of the child support: if the state lets the family keep up to \$100 a month in child support for one child and \$200 a month for two or more children, the federal government will waive its claim to half of those amounts.

**The bill would send families the full amount permitted by federal law so needy children get more of the support that is paid for them.**

### Child support for children after TAFDC ends

Currently, families who get TAFDC must assign their rights to current support and also their rights to any uncollected back support (arrears) due before TAFDC began. When the family goes off assistance, the state sends half of any arrears that are collected to the federal government and keeps the rest to repay itself for the past TAFDC instead of sending it to the children for whom it was paid.

Because of a change in federal law, if the state pays the family all child support collected after TAFDC ends, it doesn't have to pay the federal government any of the collection. **The bill directs DOR to implement this option so that children in former TAFDC families get all of the child support that is paid for them.**

**Please co-sponsor this bill and help bring child support home.**

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## **AN ACT TO BRING CHILD SUPPORT HOME**

SECTION 1. Section 2 of chapter 118 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2008 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting at the end of the first paragraph the following:-- Child support collections shall be paid to a recipient of benefits under this chapter to the extent that the federal government will waive or not have a claim to a federal share of such collections pursuant to 42 U.S.C. section 657. Any amounts paid to the family under this provision shall be disregarded in determining the amount of assistance provided to the family.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of chapter 119A of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting at the end of subsection (b) the following:-- Pursuant to Title IV, Part D of the Social Security Act, in the case of former recipients of assistance, the IV-D agency shall pay to the family all support payments collected, including payments on arrears assigned to the state and payments collected through federal tax refund offset.

SECTION 3. Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on July 1, 2013.

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